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The Musket

LEXINGTON HIGH SCHOOL'S STUDENT-RUN NEWSPAPER SINCE 1969

Senior Destinations
From Singapore to the U.K., the Class of 2013 is ready to take on the world. Find out where they're going next year!
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NAVIANCE

The Cold, Hard Stats
Opinion editor Kyle Harvey bursts the Naviance bubble, pinpointing the fallacies of its notorious scattergrams.
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Volume LIV Issue VI— May 28, 2013

Navigating next year: At home and abroad

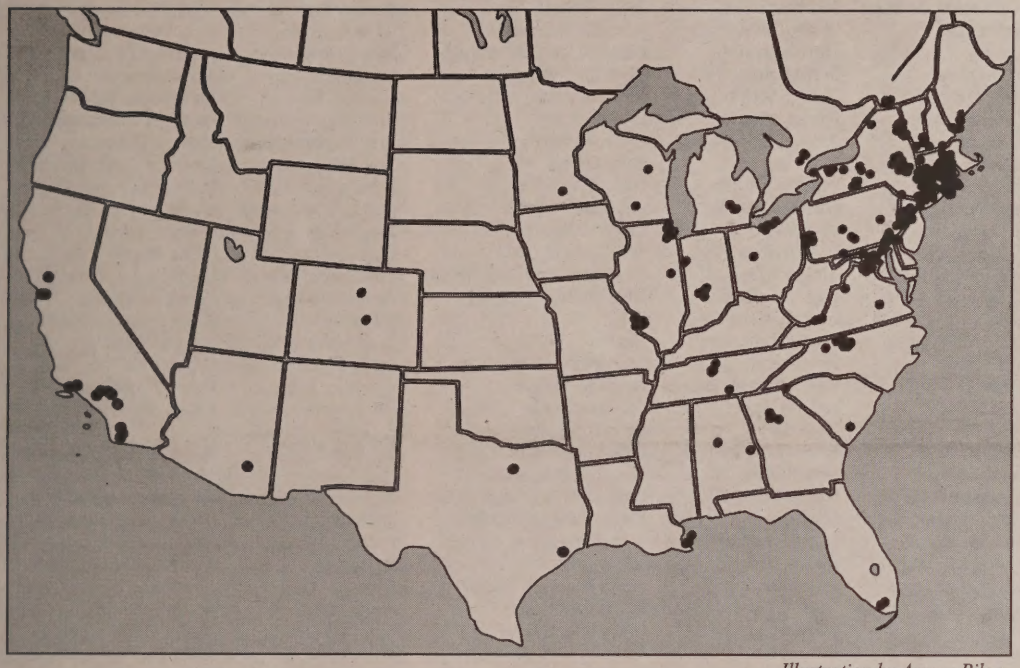
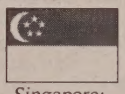


Illustration by Arman Bilge

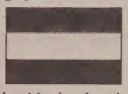
Each point represents an individual senior scattered around the institution he or she is headed to next year.

International College Destinations:

Canada:
- Bible Hill
- Halifax
- Montreal
- Toronto
- Vancouver



Singapore:
- Singapore



The Netherlands:
- Rotterdam

United Kingdom:
- Fife
- Oxford

Seniors pursue alternative paths after Lexington High School

Alice Ren
Hoda Yehia
A&E Editors

For the past few weeks, college news has overflowed mailboxes and computers, consuming the minds of Lexington High School students.

Yet with so much focus on the immediate transition to college, other post–secondary options are often overlooked, even as some choose to take them.

Drorr Marx, Christopher Lewis, Nick Trano and Eli Mattingly are four seniors who will blaze their own trails before heading to college.

While many of her peers will take the traditional route this fall, Marx will be taking a gap year through the Israeli Scouts to do community service in Israel. Having participated in the program for the past five years, Marx will teach and volunteer at various Israeli schools and shelters as a head counselor.

She said her past experience with the program was what led her to consider taking a gap year in the first place.

"The feeling [that] someone appreciates you for what you teach them and what your personality is like is very rewarding," she said.

Marx added that in postponing college, she wanted to become tougher not only by being far from home, but also by spending time with those less fortunate to understand that she is "very lucky for what I have."

Lewis will follow his older brother's footsteps by joining the U.S. Army. He cited the increasing costs and uncertain trade–offs of post–secondary education as reasons why he chose not to immediately enroll in college.

"I feel like traditionally, it's how people [grew] up: it's just go to school, get the degree from high school, and go to college, get a job," Lewis said. "But nowadays, going to college isn't necessarily guaranteeing you a job."

Trano, who will enlist in the U.S. Navy, shared similar thoughts.

"A lot of people go to college even when they don't necessarily need to," he said. "College degrees are getting less and less valuable and military experience is not getting any less valuable."

Though Trano plans to later earn a degree to become an English teacher, he believes the Navy will impart invaluable lessons that will better prepare him for the academic rigor of college.

"For one, the Navy gives you discipline," he said, "so I think that six years down the line, [I'll] go to college, and if I can turn in a homework assignment to the professor he'll [say], 'Well, this is exactly what I expected of you,' and I'll be like, 'Thank the Navy.'"

Mattingly is also deferring college to serve in the military. After undergoing seven months of basic training and Advance Individual Training to become an Army medic, he will attend UMass Amherst the following year.

"The only difference will be I will drill every month to train with the National Guard," he wrote in an email. "In case anything happens, I will be activated to help out."

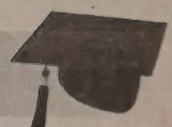
Mattingly enlisted because he wanted to contribute in a meaningful way through serving his country.

"I want to help people in ways greater than anything you can do on the civilian side of things," he wrote. "I want to do something I will be proud of."

Although their plans are atypical, these seniors share the same anticipation for the future and nostalgia for the

[PATHS, page 7]

CLASS OF 2013 SENIOR DESTINATIONS



Abe, Taiga	Harvard University
Abrams, Sydney	Colby College
Ada, Elijah	UC Los Angeles
Adams, Nathaniel	Dartmouth College
Akkurt, Nur	McGill University
Akmal, Omar	Suffolk University
Akram, Ariana	Merrimack College
Alexandrou, Anna	University of New Hampshire
Aliati Neto, Valdir	Virginia Tech
Almeida, Matthew	UMass Amherst
Alpert, Sam	UC Santa Barbara
Altschuler, Jessica	University of Maryland
Alvarez, Victor	UMass Dartmouth
Ames, Harry	Maryland Institute College of Art
Anderson, Jessica	Middlesex Community College
Arciprete, Joseph	Brandeis University
Armstrong, Toby	UMass Amherst
Aroyan, Garni	University of Connecticut
Arroyo, Wilbert	Newbury College
Arslanian, Rose	UMass Amherst
Atkins, David	Amherst College
Austin, Tamar	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Avery, Carolyn	Saint Michael's College
Azaroff, Michelle	Boston University
Bara, Savannah	Manhattanville College
Barbieri, Cody	Work/Peterson School
Barnes, Amanda	Worcester State University
Barry, Mike	American University
Bartel, Katarina	Emory University
Bartels, Alan	Tufts University
Benjamin, Judy-Lynn	Framingham State University
Bernstein, Daniel	George Washington University
Bhupatiraju, Surya	MIT
Bladd, Brittany	Syracuse University
Blumenthal, Anna	Wheaton College
Boker, Nadav	UMass Amherst
Boker, Shai	Middlesex Community College
Bollag-Miller, Ian	Colby College
Bongiovanni, Ashley	Gordon College
Borensztein, Maia	UMass Amherst
Brady, Kaitlin	Texas Christian University
Brainard, Abbey	Virginia Tech
Breitenfeld, Laura	Mount Holyoke College
Brick, Eli	Colgate University
Briggs, Nicholas	Purdue University
Brown, Benjamin	Georgetown University
Buschini II, John	Merrimack College
Bush, Jeffrey	MassBay Community College
Bush, Kristina	Mount Holyoke College
Byrne, Tyler	U.S. Marines
Cai, Nancy	Smith College
Cancre, Felix	Yale University
Carruthers, Joshua	University of Delaware
Celine, Na'ama	UMass Amherst
Chan, Taylor	University of Houston
Chan, Wing	SUNY Buffalo
Chang, Christine	University of Michigan
Chang, Claire	UMass Amherst
Chang, Winnie	Smith College
Chaput, Nicholas	Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Chari, Pavitra	Northeastern University
Chen, Alex	University of Virginia
Chen, Jerry	University of Chicago
Chen, Perry	Skidmore College
Chew, Eric	Stanford University
Chiakpo, Bryan	Boston University
Chiang, Eric	Cornell University
Chiarelli, Talia	University of Michigan
Childs, Timothy	Hampshire College
Chipalkatti, Naina	University of Southern California
Chippada, Sameera	UMass Amherst
Chiu, Alan	
Cho, Hyun Jae	New York University
Chow, Fiona	Boston University
Christian, Sherman	Tilton School
Chua, Sami	Boston University
Chuang, Margaret	Northeastern University
Chung, Felix	New York University
Chung, Fiona	Gap Year/Wellesley College
Chung, Shelby	Roger Williams University
Cincotta, Carlo	UMass Amherst
Clayton, Michal	Brown University
Conn, Alixe	Tulane University
Cooper, Grace	McDaniel College
Costa, Bruno	Northeastern University
Cue, Brendan	University of St. Andrews
Cunningham, Scott	Saint Michael's College
Curley, Elizabeth	University of Rhode Island
Daftardar, Akshay	Purdue University
Daley, Bryan	University of Rhode Island
Daruwala, Morgan	Oberlin College
Daus-Haberle, Spencer	Wesleyan University
Davidson, Henry	Dickinson College
DeCarlo, Michelle	
Denning, Jacqueline	Quinnipiac University
Dickenson, Catherine	Gap Year
Dimodica, Dana	Vanderbilt University
DiNapoli, Caroline	Duke University
Ding, Alexandra	Harvard University
Ding, Darwin	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Diramio, Antonio	Plymouth State University
Dobbs, Adam	University of Alabama
Dohan, Sarah	Middlebury College
Dolan, Matt	UMass Lowell
Domings, Mary	Fisher College
Donahue, Benedict	Northwestern University
Doo, Kristen	UMass Amherst
Dooley, Caitlyn	Salem State University
Driscoll, Annelise	Westfield State University
Dugan, Caroline	Université Sainte-Anne
Dulberg, Sophie	Tufts University
Dunyak, Alexander	UMass Amherst
Dupupet, Quentin	UMass Amherst
Eddy, Sam	Union College
Eichenberg, Carter	UMass Lowell
Eickstedt, Samuel	University of Illinois
Elany, Maya	Oberlin College
Emanuel, David	Post-Graduate Year
Emmerich, Elaine	Washington University in St. Louis
Engelberg, Isabelle	Johns Hopkins University
Eriksson, Alexander	MIT
Ernst, Robert	Gap Year
Evans, Isabel	Johns Hopkins University
Everett-Hannah, Shatora	Barry University
Feldman, Arden	Colorado College
Finch, Daniel	Dartmouth College
Finley-Moise, Tulie	University of Hartford
Fiore, Kristen	Haverford College
Flaster, Sam	Washington University in St. Louis
Foley, Jack	Roger Williams University
Foster, Amanda	Rutgers University
Fradkin, Haley	Tulane University
Fuery, Melissa	Loyola University Chicago
Gagliardi, Nick	UMass Dartmouth
Galvin, Lucy	Emory University
Gens, Russell	Gap Year/Tufts University
Gholizadeh, Yaseen	
Go, Caitlin	Stanford University
Goemans, Sophie	MIT
Gold, Lydia	Vassar College
Goldin, Ben	UMass Lowell
Gonzalez, Eddie	
Gordon, Ben	Elon University
Gordon, Rider	University of Vermont
Grant, Abby	Johns Hopkins University
Gravallese, Carly	Keene State College
Gray, Samantha	Middlesex Community College
Green, Elizabeth	Middlebury College
Grewal, Akshay	University of Maryland
Gross, Robin	Boston College
Gunther, Zachary	University of Chicago
Guo, Lily	
Hagan, Matthew	UMass Amherst
Hahm, Eunice	Cornell University
Haines, Harrison	Gap Year
Hall, Kahreem	
Hallaj, Nadia	Tufts University
Ham, Ryan	UMass Lowell
Han, Andrea	Boston University
Han, Elliot	UC San Diego
Harisinghani, Puneet	University of Toronto
Harvey, Kyle	Duke University
Hay, Athena	Mass College of Art and Design
He, Monica	Northeastern University
Hernandez, Kristen	College of William and Mary
Hess, Steven	George Washington University
Hewes, Juliet	Tufts University
Hild, Christopher	
Hoffman, Adam	Washington University in St. Louis
Hoffman, Becky	Sacred Heart University
Hu, Emily	Columbia University
Hu, Krista	Northeastern University
Huang, Claire	Columbia University
Huang, Julien	Suffolk University
Huang, Yubing	
Hughes, Caitlin	Stonehill College
Ikezu, Tadafumi	Boston University
Ioakimidis, Alexander	Rutgers University
Ip, Leo	Bentley University
Isern, Camila	Boston College
Iuliano, Russell	University of Southern California
Ivanenko, Maria	Yale-NUS College
Jackson, Freya	University of New Hampshire
Jakob, Allison	UMass Amherst
Jaleel, Zaroug	Tufts University
Jayakumar, Ambika	Tufts University
Jenkins, Simone	Suffolk University
Jeon, Tom	UMass Amherst
Jeong, Ji-In	Gordon College
Jeong, Michael	University of Toronto
Job-Reese, Ricardo	UMass Boston
Johnson, Elizabeth	University of Vermont
Johnson, JaRell	Bridgewater State University
Johnson, Jazzmyne	Bunker Hill Community College
Johnston, Andrew	Boston University
Johnston, David	Northeastern University
Jones, Matthew	Middlesex Community College
Jung, Michelle	Simmons College
Jung, Phillip	University of Pennsylvania
Kajko, Kristyn	St. John's University
Kanesa-Thasan, Anish	Washington University in St. Louis
Kang, Abraham	UMass Amherst
Kang, Josh	UC San Diego
Kannemeyer, Michael	Quinnipiac University
Kannemeyer, Sean	Quinnipiac University
Kao, Jesse	Washington University in St. Louis
Kaplan-Duerr, Noah	Ursinus College
Kaplan, Grace	Skidmore College
Karnofsky, Joshua	University of Pennsylvania
Karr Kaitin, Emily	College of Charleston
Karthikeyan, Vashitganesan	
Katsarakes, Peter	Mercersbury Academy
Katz, Yordanos	Ohio Wesleyan University
Kaufman, Benjamin	Wesleyan University
Kenny, Bryan	UMass Lowell
Kenny, Martin	
Khasnabish, Srijesa	Boston University
Kilbridge, Daniel	American University
Kilpatrick, Justin	Rowan University
Kim, Daniel	Wesleyan University
Kim, Eugenia	Georgia Institute of Technology
Kim, Eunice	UMass Lowell
Kim, Jee Soo	Harvard University
Kim, Justin	Case Western Reserve University
King, Carly	UMass Amherst
Kitazawa, Naomi	George Mason University
Kofoed, Spencer	Gap Year
Korn, Rebecca	Brandeis University
Kornstein, Leah	Dalhousie University
Kovari, Irina	UMass Amherst
Kropper, Geneva	University of Maryland
Kuszmaul, Lizzie	Wellesley College
Kwak, Do Hyung	University of British Columbia
Kyle, Julian	Westfield State University
Lacey, Matt	Brewster Academy
Lam, Eric	UMass Amherst
Lam, Hung	
Lang, Jeff	Dartmouth College
Larson, Sylvia	St. Olaf College
Le, William	
Lee, Andie	Vanderbilt University
Lee, Cassie	University of Toronto
Lee, Jennifer	University of Connecticut
Lee, Kyu Il	University of Pennsylvania
Lee, Matt	SUNY Purchase
Lee, Seung Eon	UMass Amherst
Lee, Timmy	Oxford College at Emory University
Lehman, Sara	Williams College
Leshchinsky, Leah	UMass Amherst
Levine, Max	University of New Hampshire
Lewis, Christopher	U.S. Army
Li, Amy	Carnegie Mellon University
Li, Kevin	Brandeis University
Lin, Darren	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Lin, Elon	Northeastern University

The Musket is proud to present Senior Destinations, our annual compilation of the various plans for the graduating Class of 2013. This information has been compiled to the best of The

Lin, Karen	Cornell University
Lin, Henry Ting-Hung	UMass Dartmouth
Liou, Austin	Boston University
Lipschutz, Miriam	University of Vermont
Liu, Alan	MCPHS
Ljungberg, Isabel	University of British Columbia
Lo, Joyce	Northeastern University
Lockwood, Will	New York University
Lok, Jay	Northeastern University
Lopes, Kate	Salve Regina University
Lowry, Emily	Bates College
Lu, Erika	MIT
Lu, Kevin	University of Maryland
Lucke, Verena	Indiana University
Lung, James	Washington University in St. Louis
Lyons, Hannah	UMass Boston
Ma, Grace	University of Miami
Maeda, Saaya	New York University
Maffa, Daniel	Connecticut College
Magauran, Kate	Elon University
Maglio, Christina	Johnson & Wales University
Mahler, Jesse	Tufts University
Man, Hil Lam	Brandeis University
Manuelian, Ami	Universitity of Rhode Island
Markovitz, Netana	Columbia University
Marshall, Keith	Ithaca College
Marten, Danielle	University of Delaware
Martin, Shauna	UMass Lowell
Martinez, Alec	University of Maryland
Marty, Noelle	Oberlin Conservatory
Marx, Drorr	Gap Year
Mattingly, Eli	National Guard/UMass Amherst
Maynard, Bridgette	UMass Amherst
Mazur, Matt	Trinity College
McCall-Scott, Victor	UMass Dartmouth
McCullough IV, Robert	Johnson & Wales University
McDevitt, David	Northeastern University
McDonald, Robbie	University of Colorado Boulder
McElhatton, Kevin	
McGloin, Rory	Northeastern University
McMahan, Emily	University of Southern California
McNamara, Paige	Villanova University
McNeil, Kari	Tufts University
McWeeney, Joey	Babson College
Meade, Maisie	Boston University
Meadows, Dylan	Gap Year
Melnick, Josh	Gap Year/New York University
Mendelsohn, Michael	Duke University
Meyers, Ellen	Syracuse University
Miller, Miles	Clarkson University
Min, OnKee	University of Pittsburgh
Mitchell, Katherine	University of Vermont
Moawad, Ahmed	University of Pittsburgh
Mok, Yennie	Brandeis University
Monzillo, Megan	College of the Atlantic
Murphy, Megan	
Murray, Erin	University of Maine
Mursalin-Alexandre, Xavier	UMass Boston
Mustoe, Elliot	Northeastern University
Myers, Cody	
Nagai, Manavi	Boston University
Nakyejwe, Suubi	Gordon College
Narayanan, Krishna	Brandeis University
Neal, Patrick	UMass Amherst
Nerolien, Nick	University at Albany
Neumann, Sarah	Williams College
Ngo, Becky	University of Vermont
Nguyen, Brandon	Northeastern University
Nilsson, Henrik	University of Vermont
Offerhaus, Roos	Erasmus University Rotterdam
Oh, Brian	UMass Boston
Ojdrovic, Petar	Boston University
Oliver, Jackie	Framingham State University
Olivier, Luke	Gap Year
Ollendorf, Alexander	Northeastern University
Ong, Benjamin	University of Delaware
Osher, Nate	Carleton College
Pan, Richard	Vanderbilt University
Pardes, Amber	Chapman University
Park, Jason	Arcadia University
Park, Jean	Boston College
Parker, Noah	UC Santa Barbara
Parrish, Garrett	Harvard University
Patel, Kayla	UC Los Angeles
Pato, Dylan	
Patwari, Aishani	Boston University
Pedulla, Alexa	Parsons The New School for Design
Petitti, Donna	UMass Amherst
Pieri, Carl	Northwestern University
Pion, Sara	Skidmore College
Porras, Victor	University of Oxford
Powers, Kate	Bowdoin College
Powers, Nikia	UMass Lowell
Prager, Aaron	
Previte, Joseph	Rivier University
Pronchick, Natalia	Union College
Psyhojos, Thaya	Cornell University
Puka-Beals, Jesse	Gap Year/Cornell University
Puschak, Natalie	Salve Regina University
Pydah, Vikas Shiva	Vanderbilt University
Qin, Catherine	Harvard University
Qin, Tim	Boston University
Qin, Will	Colby College
Quadir, Anisha	Middlebury College
Ramon, Ori	Israeli Army
Ramseyer, Geoffrey	University of Chicago
Reddy, Vishruth	Washington University in St. Louis
Reginald, Monisha	Northeastern University
Rehman, Haris	
Resnick, Hannah	New York University
Reynolds, Bridget	Indiana University Bloomington
Rice, Kate	Gap Year
Richkin, Talia	Colby College
Richter, Elam	
Rodrig, Kim	UC Berkeley
Rogers, William	UMass Amherst
Rose, Patrick	Johns Hopkins University
Rosen, Ike	Washington University in St. Louis
Rosenfield, Libby	Penn State University
Ross, Connor	UMass Amherst
Rossi, Phil	Montserrat College of Art
Rothstein, Talia	Harvard University
Ruben, Eli	Skidmore College
Sacco, Giustina	University of Hartford
Salem, Nasreen	University of Rhode Island
Salisbury, Samuel	Berklee College of Music
Sanders, Wyatt	University of Vermont
Schembor, Christian	University of Arizona
Schmidt, Catherine	Carnegie Mellon University
Schneider, Simon	Gap Year
Schreibman, Matthew	UMass Amherst
Schulze, Nina	UMass Amherst
Seferian, Alec	
Sekula, Nicole	Bowdoin College
Setayesh, Cheyan	University of Connecticut
Shan, Andrew	UC San Diego
Shan, Yuankai	New York University
Shaw, Meghan	
Sheena, Alex	Tulane University
Sheffield, James	
Shen Molesky, Nadine	Tufts University
Shen, Hao	MIT
Shenker, Abigail	
Shiao, Brian	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Shin, Edward	Carnegie Mellon University
Shiue, Priscilla	
Shorter, Matthew	Brown University
Siddiqui, Raffah	UMass Boston
Singer, Matthew	Indiana University
Skerker, Jennifer	Tufts University
Smail, Greg	University of Wisconsin-Madison
Smith, Charles	Hobart and William Smith Colleges
Smith, Jeremy	Washington University in St. Louis
Snyder, Luke	Work
Somers, Imari	Columbia College Chicago
Song, Tim	Rutgers University
Songtachalert, Pawinn	University of Vermont
Spero, Danny	University of Pittsburgh
Stahl, Katie	Connecticut College
Steadman, Rachael	UMass Dartmouth
Stein, Jason	Harvard University
Stevenson, Lindsay	Sewanee University of the South
Stirrat, Thomas	Wake Forest University
Strohmeyer, Zachary	Elon University
Suber, Victoria	Temple University
Sun, Emily	Carnegie Mellon University
Sussman, Sara	Gap Year
Svenson, Adrian	Rochester Institute of Technology
Tabak, Paul	Bentley University
Tan, Rae Lin	Mass College of Art and Design
Tarrh, Evan	Columbia University
Tatsuta, Akiho	MCPHS
Taves, Matt	Sacred Heart University
Taylor, Kathryn	McGill University
Tetzaguic, Daniel	MassBay Community College
Thatai, Shreya	Wellesley College
Thomke, Vikram	Wentworth Institute of Technology
Tidor, Jonathan	MIT
Tomiyama, Kento	Newbury College
Tomlinson, Jenistine	MassBay Community College
Trano, Nick	U.S. Navy
Troutman, Isabelle	Dickinson College
Van Etten, Christopher	University of Michigan
Vanderhooft, Megan	Boston College
Vaughan, Celia	Westfield State University
Veeragandham, Prashanth	Case Western Reserve University
Velonias, George	Brandeis University
Vernet, Ashley	Pace University
Virk, Ranya	McGill University
Vitunic, Taylor	Washington University in St. Louis
Voto, Ryan	St. Norbert College
Walsh-Brown, Anthony	
Wambe, Helene	
Wang, Bruce	Boston College
Wang, Susan	Harvard University
Waters, Khira	American International College
Watson, Chris	Lehigh University
Weiser, Rebecca	New York University
Wharton, Veronica	Rochester Institute of Technology
Wheaton, Emmy	Harvard University
Whelan, Daniel	
Wichlei, Sara	Wheaton College
Williams, Brendan	Pace University
Williams, Sam	Mass Maritime Academy
Wilson, Bri	Virginia Tech
Wilson, Kayla	Northeastern University
Wilson, Ryan	Auburn University
Wilson, Stephanie	UMass Lowell
Winton, Mariel	Quinnipiac University
Wong, Andrew	Gap Year/Salem State University
Wong, Brandon	Northeastern University
Wong, Melissa	McGill University
Wooh, Jeannie	UMass Amherst
Wright, Alexandria	Gap Year
Wu, Emily	Villanova University
Wu, Josephine	UC Berkeley
Xia, Jimmy	Brown University
Xu, Chris	Eastman School of Music
Yam, Jonathan	UMass Amherst
Yang, Anna	University of Pennsylvania
Yang, Annie	New York University
Yang, Jamie	Wellesley College
Yang, Leo	College of New Jersey
Ye, Chunyi	Salem State University
Yehia, Hoda	Boston University
Yeung, Alicia	George Washington University
Yin, Stephanie	Tufts University
Young, James	National Guard
Yunus, Aldila	UMass Amherst
Zack, Jamie	Washington University in St. Louis
Zanin, Laura	Clemson University
Zgripcea-Bailey, Darius	Indiana University
Zhang, Evan	Cornell University
Zhang, Huixin	UMass Amherst
Zhang, Kelly	Tufts University
Zhang, Nancy	UMass Amherst
Zhang, Peijin	Carnegie Mellon University
Zhang, Ryan	Carnegie Mellon University
Zhang, Vivian	
Zhitnik, Eliza	Boston University
Zhou, Alan	MIT
Zhou, Paul	Wesleyan University
Zhu, Andrew	Johns Hopkins University
Zhu, Lily	McGill University

Class of 2013 Top Twelve Destinations

UMass Amherst	**33**
Northeastern University	**17**
Boston University	**16**
Gap Year	**16**
Tufts University	**13**
Washington University in St. Louis	**10**
Harvard University	**9**
New York University	**9**
UMass Lowell	**9**
University of Vermont	**8**
Brandeis University	**7**
MIT	**7**

Musket's ability, and we apologize for any inaccuracies. This list may not be reproduced without written permission. Congratulations to all the seniors of the Class of 2013 from The Musket!

Naviance disheartens, misleads students

■ Kyle Harvey
Opinion Editor

You see that red circle on the screen? That's you. Everything you've worked for for the past three years has been condensed into a barely visible circle for your personal convenience. Don't worry, you can thank Naviance later. They're still waiting to hear from me.

To aid students in planning their futures, Lexington High School uses an online tool called Naviance Family Connection to coordinate everything from career matching to transcript requests.

But one utility catches every rising senior's interest: the college scatter plot. To help students formulate a realistic college list, Naviance displays data on past LHS graduates' admissions decisions, in the form of those infamous scattergrams.

It's fairly straightforward — which is precisely the problem. Type in any college name and a scattergram appears with SAT score and GPA on the x and y-axes and a mass of symbols in between, representing every LHS student who applied to the school in the past three years. A green circle indicates acceptance; a red X, rejection. Anything else is a deferral, waitlist or combination of any of the above.

Although there is nothing wrong with providing this information, Naviance oversteps its bounds by burdening innocent juniors with their own personal circles, plopping them right into the college warzone. These hopefuls look at their dream schools, only to find themselves in the "land of the red X" and brush that school off as just that — a dream.

"It's depressing. You see your dream schools and realize you're not going to get in," said Nancy Cai, a senior. "Also, the national statistics are a lot lower than the Lexington-specific statistics, which can be even more discouraging."

So, why not thank this prophetic database for grounding us in reality? Because nothing's set in stone. Every year's decisions change the landscape. Some green dots pop up among the red, and red where before it was green. Suddenly, juniors are confronted with a new set of seemingly rigid standards. But the key is that the distribution is always shifting with new outliers and slowly changing averages.

Instead of helping students make realistic decisions, Naviance oversimplifies college admissions criteria, restricting students' aspirations.

"In some ways I've had a negative experience with Naviance because it discourages me from applying to reach schools," said Srijesa Khasnabish, another senior disillusioned with the software. "SATs and GPA are important. But there is so much more involved with getting into college."

It's easy to forget that what separates this two-dimensional tool from admission is everything else that colleges care about. UMass Amherst, which yearly matriculates the most students from LHS as compared to any other college, searches for students who "bring their unique strengths and diverse talents to the UMass Amherst campus," according to its undergraduate admissions website.

Similarly, read through the "what we seek" passage from top–tier schools and you won't find any mention of GPA or SAT. Rather, they deliberately de-emphasize the importance of such numbers.

"Academic accomplishment in high school is important, but we also seek people with enthusiasm, creativity and strength of character," according to Harvard's admissions office website.

No doubt SAT and GPA serve as a baseline in college admissions. But what Naviance doesn't show is all of the extracurricular achievements and personal quirks that ultimately attract a school to an applicant.

So, when staring at your red circle amidst those triangles and Xs, understand what separates you from every other symbol on the graph. Your decision hasn't happened yet, and you might just be surprised.

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past as any other LHS graduate.

"I am excited for my future, and I want to live the military lifestyle," wrote Mattingly, "but the other side of things is that I will miss a lot of things in Lexington — life will be a lot different. I'm trying to just enjoy my time here while I have it."

As for future seniors planning life after LHS, Trano and Marx offered their insight on the value of taking a detour on the road to college.

"I just feel like it's good to explore another path before going to college because you don't really lose anything," Trano said.

Marx echoed these sentiments.

"I think it would be really clever to take a gap year to really understand what you want to do in college ... and just ... to invest in your mind and your soul," she said.

THANK YOU

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